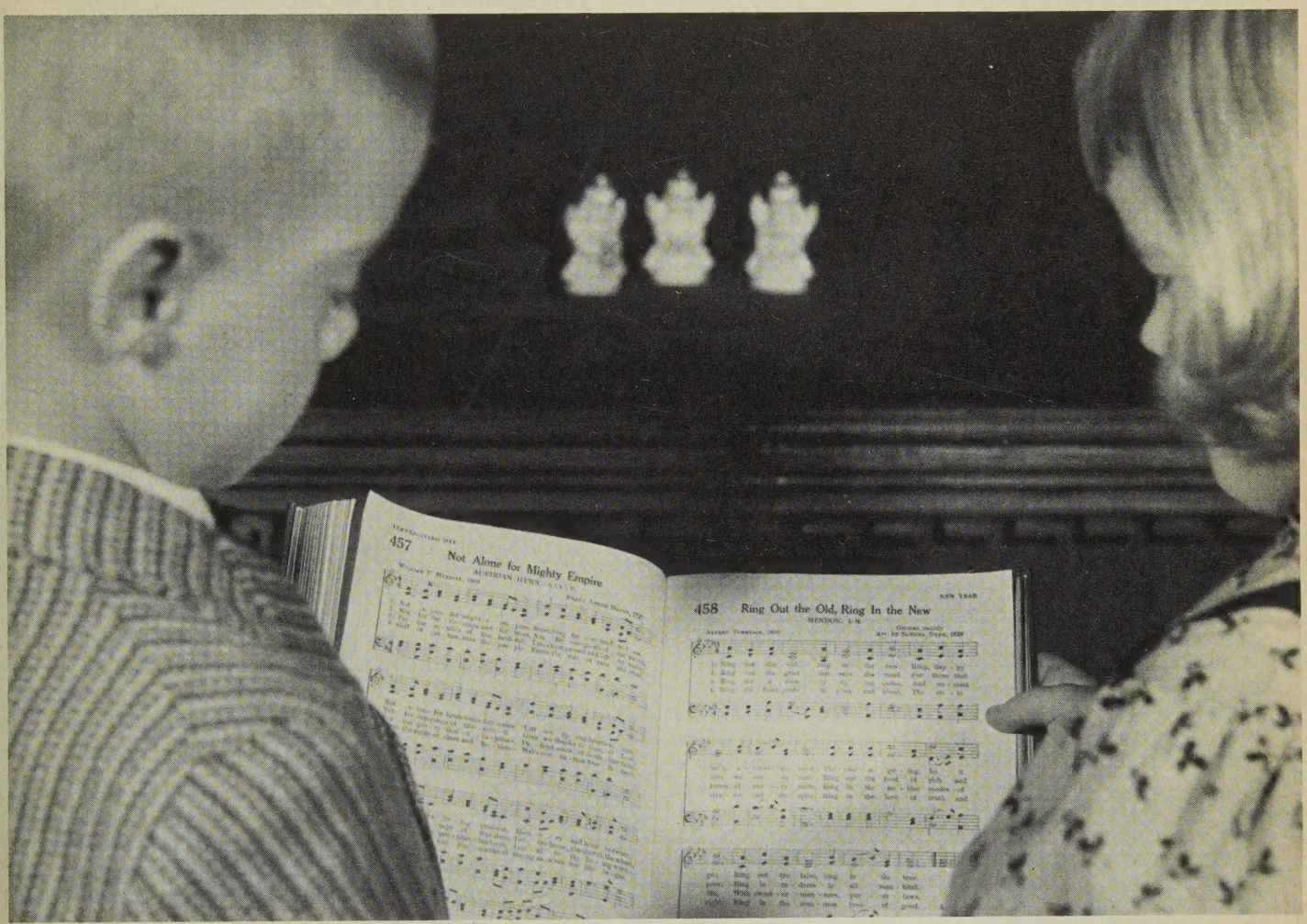
The Congregationalist

Be Sure to Read

Pine Trees and Christian Missions.
Congregational Freedom and the United Church.
World-Wide Campaign Against Religious Freedom.

And Other Timely Articles

VOLUME 3 JANUARY, 1960 NUMBER 1

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." — Galatians 5:1

A MESSAGE FROM SAVOY

Rev. Arthur A. Rouner Jr., Newton, Massachusetts

(The Final Instalment of Mr. Rouner's Address at the National Association Annual Meeting, July, 1959)

The Savoy meeting was a long time ago — three hundred years ago. Can the message of those men at Savoy for their day, be in any sense a message to Congregational people in our day?

I can only say it has had a message to speak to me. What Savoy says to me is that somewhere in our three hundred years of history, we Congregationalists of America have forgotten the heart of our heritage. It says to me that we have cut loose from the great anchors of our faith which could make our witness as Christians of the Congregational Way a great witness.

What our fathers at Savoy really intended the life of our churches to be like I only began to discover among the Congregationalists of Britain in the city of St. Andrews in 1953. In a quiet, simple way they have been living out the principles of Savoy until today there lives in their churches and in their personal lives a quality of Christian power that I have not found in any other group of Christians I have ever met.

Their Concern for the Spirit

For one thing, they believe in the Spirit. He is real to them. They have met Him.

Their discovery of the Holy Spirit has been in an institution implied all through the Savoy Platform — The Church Meeting. I do not mean an annual meeting full of deadly business as in most of our churches: but a monthly meeting in which the whole Church comes together literally as a "gathered" church; gathered by Christ to do His business. It is a meeting for worship as well as for business. It is a meeting in which business becomes strangely part of the worship. It is prayed over. It is held up to Christ for the guidance of His Spirit. And it is passed unanimously or not at all.

Congregationalists in Great Britain, because of the Church Meeting, have become people not the slightest bit interested in so-called "successful" church life. Their concern is for Christ, and for His people. It is for doing what God's Spirit wills and for "railroading" nothing. It is for being quiet and for waiting. That is why being Congregationalists has made saints of more than a few of those Englishmen.

The Spirit and Church Attendance

Their concern for the Spirit has done something also to their Sunday worship. I shall never forget the little woman minister who turned to me after a meeting of the 1958 International Congregational Council in a large Hartford Church and asked, "How many people would you guess this church holds?"

I suggested 600, and she pointed to the figure of 2500 members listed in the church calendar and exclaimed, "But how do they all get in for worship?" I explained that naturally they couldn't all worship at once and that probably — even with two services — fewer than half of them come to church on a given Sunday anyway.

"Could that be?" she said. Then she spoke of her Church of 300 being one of the larger Congregational Churches in Britain. I asked, "Well, how many of your people come to worship?" "Oh, about 300," was her reply.

One hundred per cent of their people at worship on the Lord's Day! This is something else that the vision of Savoy had done for the British Churches. And when you are that kind of Church, may I say, you can afford to be independent — in the best sense of the word. You can talk about freedom then: freedom to follow Christ, and be His instruments in the world.

Belief in the Spirit, power in worship, and the best kind of Christian independence — these only begin to tell what the insights of Savoy have meant for some Congregational Churches. It is a whole new life that Savoy promises for Churches of the Congregational Way in the year of our Lord, 1959.

The Message of Savoy

Please do not misunderstand. Her message is not to us: "You're doing fine!" and to those whose view of Congregationalism is different from ours: "You're wrong; you do not understand at all!"

The message from Savoy is a message of judgment and of hope to both houses of American Congregationalism. To the one side her word is "Freedom is not enough! Freedom is only part of the Congregational Way!" And to the other, it is: "You love the wrong kind of authority. Authority, yes! But that of God and not man!"

Our fathers at Scrooby and at Savoy were ready to give their lives to be free. But the only reason they wanted that freedom was to submit themselves in utter obedience to the One who, alone in all the earth, was their Lord, and their Saviour, and their King.

The way of church life which the saints of our faith once fashioned for us is the most daring, the most precarious, and the most wonderful way there is. It is the way of complete freedom and complete obedience to the will and the leading of the Spirit of Christ.

This, I believe, is the exciting news which the saints at Savoy are crying out for us to hear across the 300 years of our history. As one who loves the Congregational Way, I have found no message more hopeful than this. For it proclaims a new life in Christ which we can live, if we dare.

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NEWS NOTES

Honor For Michigan Layman. Dr. Earl L. Baker, a member of the First Congregational Church of Traverse City, Michigan, has been appointed to the National Committee on Protestant Service of the Boy Scouts of America, a committee concerned with promoting a Protestant Program for Scouting, including the "God and Country Award."

Dr. Kellogg Completes Fifty Years. On July 25 last, Rev. Harry G. Kellogg observed the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination to the ministry. He is now working with the Y. M. — Y. W. C. A. of Ann Arbor, Michigan, and is an Affiliated Minister of the First Congregational Church of that city. He writes "I am still a CONGREGATIONALIST and a free-born American citizen."

First Fruits At Hartford. The first two units of the building and development program at South Congregational Church, Hartford, Connecticut, have been completed. These are the Florence G. Bryant Conference Room and the Edwin Pond Parker Room, which were dedicated in November.

New Pews at Mayfair Church, Toledo. The Friendship Club of Mayfair Congregational Church, Toledo, Ohio, has been most successful in contributions to their Pew Fund. This women's group, organized in March, 1959, decided to complete the furnishings of the sanctuary. The first project undertaken was to acquire 19 pews to complete the seating arrangement. On Sunday, November 22, six of these pews were dedicated at a special Thanksgiving Service. The new pews were welcomed by the old pews on a tape recording prepared by Rev. Karl Ostberg. As each pew was dedicated, the donor cut the ribbon, permitting occupation of the pew, each pew bearing the donor's name on a brass plaque. Special musical selections were presented by the three choirs of the Church: the Children's Choir, the Junior Choir, and the Chancel Choir. The gracious donors of these pews are members and friends of the Church. This new Club is looking forward to further contributions enabling another dedication after the first of the year of the remaining pews needed for the chancel and sanctuary.

Wauwatosa Church Lays Cornerstone. The First Congregational Church of Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, laid the cornerstone of its new addition on Sunday, November 15. This addition will include a chapel, a music room, a business office, studies, conference room, and classrooms. The picture shows Douglas Carman, Chairman of the Building Committee, placing the 1959 cornerstone, and various other officers of the Church.

Educational Project Winners Announced

The prize winners in a nationwide contest sponsored by the National Association were announced on Thanksgiving Day. The purpose of the contest was to promote a better understanding of the urgent and deep need for the convictions, concepts and courage of the free Congregational Churches in our day.

The judges of the competition were Mrs. E. W. Adams, Marshalltown, Iowa, Dr. Marion John Bradshaw, Bangor, Maine, Rev. Harry W. Clark, Royal Oak, Michigan, Mrs. John Claxton, Lansing, Michigan, Dr. Russell J. Clinchy, Forest Hills, N. Y., Laurance E. Frost, Brooklyn, N. Y., John Paul Jones, Milwaukee, Wis., Mrs. Carl Masson, Dedham, Mass., Rev. Perry Schrock, Santa Ana, California, Rev. Walter Vernon, Anaheim, California. Two judges in each category examined the entries without any knowledge of their source.

Prize winners in the following categories have been announced.

1. *Article or Essay:* First ($100.00), Mrs. Sydney G. Abbot, Westford, Mass., Second ($50.00), Dr. Harry E. Goodman, Los Angeles. 2. *Drama or Play,* First, Mrs. George R. Berkaw, Jr., Detroit, Second, Mrs. George J. Mead, Hartford, Conn. 3, *Church History,* First, John G. Towns, Holbrook, Mass., Second, Clarence Stearns, Grand Marais, Minn. 4, *Anthem,* First, Mrs. E. E. Munger, Spencer, Iowa, Second, Miss Helen M. Eastes, Galesburg, Ill. *Special Awards,* Slides on Congregational History, Rev. Royal G. Davis, Los Angeles; Dramatic Reading, B. J. Long, West Hartford, Connecticut; Church School Project, Mayflower Community Congregational Church, Oklahoma City, Okla.

The sermon awards have been given to Rev. Erwin A. Britton, First Congregational Church, Wayne, Michigan (first prize) and Rev. Lowell L. Erickson, Plymouth Congregational Church, Minneapolis (second prize).

WOMEN'S WORK

Mrs. Robert E. Collins, Grand Rapids, Michigan

AN OPEN LETTER

to the Women of the National Association Churches from

Mrs. James E. Walter, Piedmont College

Writing to you all at the invitation of Our National Association Women's Commission Chairman, Mrs. Robert E. Collins, is indeed a pleasure. I remember so happily that morning I first met Mrs. Collins in the dining room of the hotel in Los Angeles. Her radiant smile was contagious from the start. Later I learned to know her as the President of the Women's Fellowship of the Mayflower Congregational Church in Grand Rapids. Her description of the growth of that modern miracle is a story of its own. I hope she will share it with us sometime on these pages.

The next thing to having you all come to our campus for a visit is visiting with each and every one of you through these pages. We are keenly grateful for all of the helpful friends who have rallied to the work of Christian higher education in the Blue Ridge Mountains of the Appalachians.

The big excitement on our campus this fall was the arrival of another splendid class of ambitious and hardworking freshmen. One by one they have fought their way through to the big decision of starting a four year college program of thinking and growing. In addition to the customary considerations of vocational choice, financial problems usually hit a high place in the realm of family decisions. For example, "Will daddy make enough cotton to help a little with his daughter's college education this fall?" Or, we may say, "Will there be enough work this year at the nearby mill to afford some monthly assistance to the youngest one who wanted to get started in college? Can the family manage to let John, in still another situation, the eldest, go to college when his help is so badly needed on the farm?"

In each of these cases the decisions were made to move forward toward a college program at Piedmont. Families are doing all that they can to help their own boys and girls, but this would be much too little to do enough good if it were not for our traditional Scholarship and Work-Aid Program, which friends like you in the Churches make possible.

Knowing that friends like you believe that youth should be free to know "the way, the truth, and the life," our admissions office says yes to every qualified young person in our Appalachian area who seeks a chance. Moreover, we reach out to twenty-five or more young people in our Churches throughout the nation who sincerely desire a chance to work a major part of their way through college.

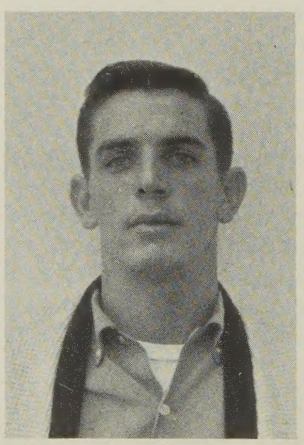
I wish we could have a tea for every group of women in every Church to present these young people in person. You would love them even as we do. However, their pictures and brief personal write-ups tell the outline of their own story.

VERNETTE ALLEY, 20, is a Junior from Clarkesville, Georgia. She has two brothers and one sister. She is a graduate of North Habersham High School where she was President of the Future Teachers of America Association, Treasurer of the Future Homemakers of America Club, and a member of the Beta Club, Tri-Hi-Y Club, and the 4-H Club.

She is a graduate of the Young Harris Junior College where she was also active in extracurricular activities. She is a member of the Methodist Church. Her church activities include organist, Secretary of the M. Y. F. and Assistant Sunday School Teacher.

At Piedmont she is a member of the Gamma Chi Literary Society, Student Christian Association, Future Teachers Club, and Secretary of the Junior Class.

Vernette plans to be an elementary school teacher. The college needs a gift of $350 to provide the Scholarship and Work-aid Program we have assured this promising future teacher.



PHILLIP PEPPERS, 18, is a freshman from Social Circle, Georgia. He has four brothers and one sister. Phillip is a graduate of Social Circle High School.

In high school Phillip was a member of the Student Council and Annual Staff. He served as President of the Future Farmers of America. He was also interested in sports, especially baseball and basketball. He is a member of the Baptist Church where he is an active member of the Sunday School, Training Union, and Choir.

At Piedmont, Phillip plans to prepare to teach and coach. During his college years he plans to participate in athletics and sing in the choir.

The college needs a gift of $375 to provide the Scholarship and Work-aid we have assured this promising young man.

WOMEN'S WORK *continued on page 11*

TO MAKE AN INTELLIGENT ANALYSIS

(*Continued from the December issue*)

At the meeting held in Detroit from October 5 to 7, which was reported in the December CONGREGATIONALIST, Hon. Henry A. Middleton of Ohio presented the following "Approach to Analysis of the Proposed Constitution for the United Church of Christ," which is here submitted for the guidance and consideration of Congregational Christian Churches as they prepare to vote on approval or disapproval of the proposed fundamental document.

1. This draft of the Constitution should be carefully studied and analyzed to:
   a. Determine the effect of each provision upon the complete autonomy of Congregational Churches;
   b. Note the significance of omissions;
   c. Emphasize the fatal effect of the power to amend;
   d. Demonstrate to wavering or troubled congregations the impossibility of welding together free, autonomous Churches into a centralized church structure.
2. An over-all Constitution is completely inconsistent with the autonomy of the local Churches.
3. Because it is impossible to draft an over-all constitution for the Congregational Christian Churches, efforts to improve this draft by change, additions, or amendments would be futile.

The Closing Session

The final general session of the Detroit conference addressed itself to a discussion of suitable procedures which might be employed in creating a favorable atmosphere wherein the proposed Constitution and By-Laws could be carefully and objectively analyzed and evaluated in the best Congregational traditions. To this end several recommendations were found to be generally acceptable, including the following:

1. That as individuals we seek to encourage our local Associations to meet for the purpose of discussing the proposed Constitution and By-Laws, and that we ask for presentation of all points of view;
2. That we urge the Churches of our National Association to send in suggestions to the Constitution Commission of the United Church of Christ, stating objections to the proposed Constitution and By-Laws and pointing out deviations from Congregational practice.
3. That we urge all Congregational Christian Churches to vote on the Constitution when the final draft is presented to the Churches for their vote.
4. That we ask the Rev. Dr. Harry R. Butman to draw up a statement showing the rights of ministers which would seem to be lost in this union, and that this be widely publicized.

An Announcement of Importance to Every Congregationalist

A Thorough Analysis of the Proposed Constitution of The "United Church of Christ" is Now Being Prepared.

Starting with these assumptions . . .

1. That all Congregational Churches will want the best study by thoughtful people as they consider the proposed Constitution;
2. That the present draft of the Constitution will in all fundamental aspects be essentially the same as the final draft;
3. That many Congregational people seem to believe that the proposed Constitution preserves Congregationalism "without break in its historic continuity";

A group of concerned Congregationalists has authorized a committee of informed people to analyze the proposed Constitution with two objectives in mind . . .

First, to compare the Constitution, section by section, with Congregational principles and polity as they have actually been practised in recent years.

Second, to secure an impartial and competent opinion as to the legal and property implications for Congregational Churches concerning any differences between the Constitution and actual Congregational practice.

The first part of this analysis will be made by a number of individuals who are thoroughly familiar with the polity of the Congregational Christian Churches, including one or more members of the committee which produced the report on "Free Church Polity and Unity".

The second part of this analysis will be made by a number of attorneys from different parts of the country who will base their judgments on actual court cases.

The whole of the analysis will then be edited for readability, and a digest of the main points will be prepared, which will then be widely circulated within our fellowship.

Both the original analysis (in mimeographed form) and the digest (in printed form) will be available to anyone who desires them. It is our thought that individuals, study groups, and Churches will want copies to aid them in their understanding of the proposed Constitution. This announcement is being made at this time because it will take several weeks for a painstaking and authoritative study such as this to be completed. As soon as it is ready, we shall be glad to send a copy of the digest to you on your request. We believe that all Congregational Churches ought to examine all viewpoints, regardless of previous votes or discussions, before making any final decision.

PINE TREES AND CHRISTIAN MISSIONS

Church Committee Members and Students Welcome the Conns

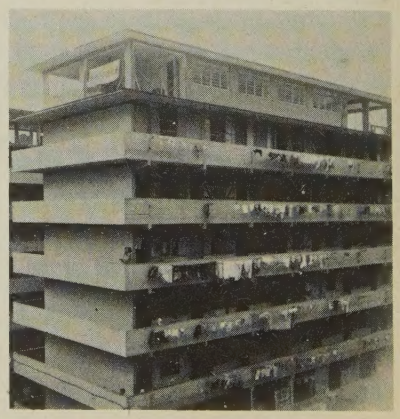
"Say, Dad," remarked a young man at the family dinner table one evening, "didn't you and Mom give a lot of money, back when I was in grade school, for the missionary work of the American Board over in China? I used to think that was something great." "Yes," replied the father, "we did all we could." "But wasn't it all for nothing? From what I have been reading, Christian work in China has just about been wiped out since the Communists took over."

Formosa Aborigine Christian Boy

"Do you remember," asked the father, "the time the forest fire wiped out the beautiful pine woods we used to like to visit when we were up-country, and how we thought everything was lost? And what is more important, do you remember what happened afterward?" "Why yes," said the son, "the seeds from the older pines had fallen over on the other side of the brook where they stopped the fire and we found that these had started another pine forest. But what has that to do with missions?"

This conversation is of course imaginary, but if it had taken place, the father could have gone on to tell how, when millions of Chinese fled from the Communists and escaped to Hong Kong and Formosa, something similar happened. The seeds of Christianity were carried into these two overcrowded islands by Chinese converts who were among the refugees. Today there are bands of dedicated Chinese Christians going through the streets of Hong Kong proclaiming to all who will listen the message of a loving God and the new life to be found in Jesus.

Not only are they preaching in the streets, but they are teaching the children, training more Chinese heralds of the good news to extend the work still farther. Roof tops of the buildings erected by the government to shelter the refugees are being utilized for chapels and schools.



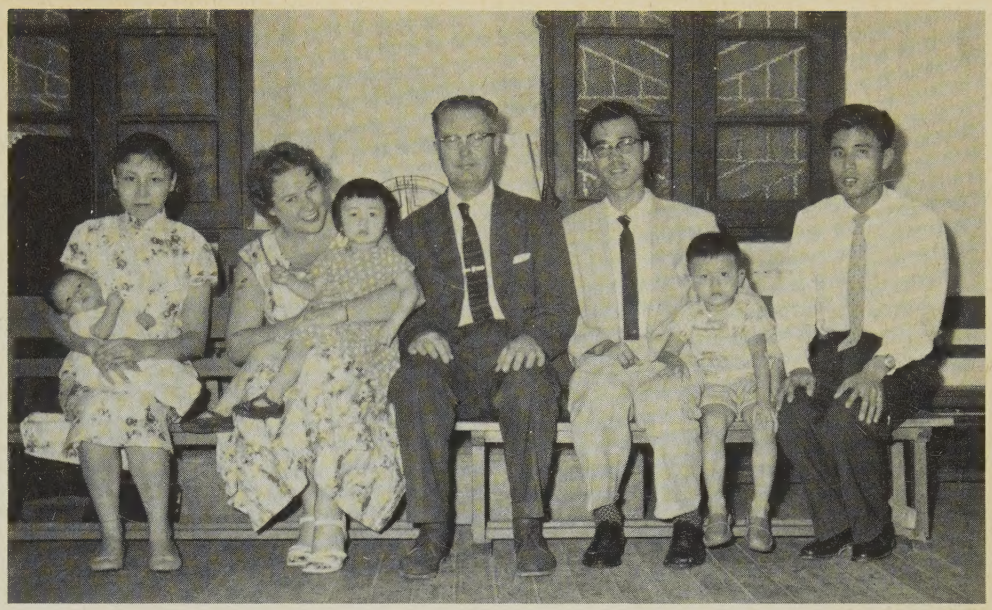
Government Dwellings for Refugees

In Formosa, Too

In Formosa, where more than twice the population of the six New England states is crowded into less than half their area, the work is being carried on in much the same way. Here the responsibility for the Christian work is being made much greater because of the thousands of aborigines, most of whom have scarcely tasted of what we call "civilization," living among the seventy mountain peaks rising over 6,500 feet above the sea.

The story of this work centers around the names of certain individuals and families who are facing odds as great as those faced by any missionaries since the days of the Haystack, perhaps as great as those faced anywhere. The names *Chen* in Hong Kong and *Wen* in Formosa may mean as much to future generations of Christians in those islands as the names of early missionaries in Gaul and Britain mean to those who know the history of those lands.

The governments of Hong Kong and Formosa have done well in providing dwellings for the refugees, and relief work in supplies of food and clothing is being done by some mission boards. But the help of Christian friends in America who know the supreme importance of the inner life is needed to sustain the evangelistic and educational work of the Chinese Christians who are showing by their lives what the gospel means to them.



Dr. and Mrs. Howard Conn with Benjamin Chen and Family, August 2, 1959

A Refugee Congregation

Pastor Wang's Flock Can Smile In The Midst Of Adversity

How We Can Help

When the seeds from mature pine trees take root and produce a new forest to replace the one destroyed by fire, the new growth will be more productive if it is under the care of trained foresters. The worth of that kind of care has been demonstrated many times. And in human life also the new growth of Christianity which has sprung up from what these mature Christians from China have been doing will be far more productive if we will do our part to help them.

Training Schools, such as Berea Bible Institute in Hong Kong, founded by the late Livingstone Chiang and now being carried on by Benjamin Chen and family (shown in picture with Dr. and Mrs. Howard Conn) are doing amazing work, but the task is too great for any such group to do without our help.

The dedicated Christian spirit of these Chinese lay-evangelists and preachers is well demonstrated in the words of Hang Shing, one of the younger leaders of the Hong Kong work. In a letter to an American friend he tells of his faith that an attack of polio in his boyhood was instrumental in bringing him to Christ. His name *Kuok*, translated into English, means "Spiritual Rock," but Hang Shing signs himself "your weakest brother in Christ."

This almost incomparable opportunity for Christian work so closely resembling that of New Testament days has been grasped by the Missionary Society of the Congregational Christian Churches, which co-operates closely with the Commission on Missions and Church Extension of the National Association. The voluntary, spontaneous work of these Chinese Christians is Congregationalism at its best — not an organization but a spirit and a movement. If you are interested in doing your part to help, or in getting your Church or its societies to study the opportunities, write to Dr. Howell D. Davies, Room 2308, 100 North LaSalle St., Chicago 2, Illinois, or to Dr. John D. Rose, 27560 California Drive, Lathrup Village, Michigan. The most direct testimony about this work may be obtained from Rev. Edward H. Smith, 138 Hancock St., Auburndale, Massachusetts. Mr. Smith is a retired missionary of the American Board whose work in China a few years ago was in no small part responsible for the Christian devotion and earnestness of those who have today responded to the call of God on this new mission field.

THE WORLD-WIDE CAMPAIGN AGAINST RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Harold C. Bailey, Hartford, Connecticut

Only a few Congregational specialists seem aware that over the past third of a century Congregationalism is gradually being extinguished. First the Congregational Churches of Canada were absorbed into the United Church of Canada in 1925. Then in succession Congregational bodies were wiped out in China (1927), in Japan (1941) and in South India (1947) by similar mergers. In 1959 a like project is going on in Australia.

So far the proposal in Britain to have the Presbyterian Church take over the Congregational Churches there has not succeeded but the effort will doubtless be continued with, or without, the cooperation of Congregational leadership. Thus the current American effort to eliminate the distinctive Congregational witness is neither novel nor unique but part of a world-wide pattern.

Values Emphasized By the Free Churches

There are some 25,000,000 Christians (1,400,000 of them "Congregationalists") in the U.S.A. who follow the distinctive principle of Congregationalism, namely the independence and completeness of the local Church as a gathered group of believers under the direct headship of Christ and immediately open to the influence of the Holy Spirit.

They also believe in the importance of the individual Christian, his right of private judgment, his freedom to act in accordance with conscience.

These believers revolted in England, even before America's first beginnings, from the central control of hierarchies and synods out of resentment against external earthly domination. At the cost of privation, exile, even of life itself, they finally succeeded in escaping ecclesiastical tyranny and founding here a number of free Churches beholden only to God Himself.

Congregationalism As An Example

The Pilgrims and Puritans gave America its distinctive character. Men free of overhead *religious* control insisted on the same freedom in their *political* affairs and established in 1648 under Thomas Hooker's Fundamental Orders the first true democracy in the world since the days of ancient Greece. They gave Europe and South America an example of a free self-governing society that was contagious. For 300 years the American experiment in freedom — religious and political — began to transform the world itself.

Now the Free World Is Shrinking

In the past quarter-century a reverse trend has made rapid progress. Large segments of the globe have sunk back into a new type of slavery, different from that from which they had partially extricated themselves. More peoples are sinking yearly.

In each case political leaders have betrayed by false representations the popular aspirations toward a yet fuller life. The Churches, too, are being used to effect the betrayal.

The Russian Orthodox Church has been captured by the state, its true bishops and priests murdered or exiled and their places filled with agents of the state's secret police given enough seminary training to pass themselves off as legitimate clergy. (*a*) Thus the grip upon the citizens has been strengthened by improper use of the confessional and in other ways.

In 1952 the Chinese Communists established at Nanking the Ginling Union Seminary for training secret service agents to operate against the Christians. One group infiltrates churches and acts as preachers, another works in the guise of missionaries and a third trains workers to brainwash Christians in the slave labor camps.

The Free World Undermined

A Soviet attempt to control Russian Orthodox Churches in America has been fought in American courts over two decades. There was also in 1953 testimony before a committee of Congress that American Communists had effected a penetration of certain theological seminaries to influence the thinking of American Protestant clergymen along lines favorable to that conspiracy. (*b*)

Two witnesses testified that they had known a professor of Christian Ethics in a leading seminary as a fellow-member of the Communist party. Repeated political recommendations of central bodies of several Protestant denominations since have done nothing to dispel suspicions that infiltration still exists.

World Council Intervenes

The principles of Congregationalism are naturally repugnant to everyone (for whatever reason) intent upon forging a single great Protestant Church or otherwise inclined toward the building up of a central authority over church members. Congregationalists find themselves now engaged in a vast power struggle into which even that august body, the World Council of Churches, has been moved to intervene. (*c*)

There is ample evidence that the new denomination (United Church of Christ) has large ambitions for the future. The next step under consideration is to extinguish the Disciples of Christ (another congregationally organized fellowship) probably with the acquiescence, if not the active collaboration, of the Disciples' top officials. This step only awaits the completion (or failure) of the present attempt to capture the Congregational Churches. Where the United Church of Christ will turn next in the huge organization buildup remains undisclosed but it would be imprudent to underestimate the aspirations of any ecumenical leader.

No less a figure than Dr. McGiffert (then President, Chicago Theological Seminary) noted in 1947, "Many ecumenically-minded leaders . . . throw themselves with magnificent but misguided earnestness and enthusiasm into projects for the organic union of Protestant denominations. But suppose they succeeded in effecting the legal union of American Protestantism, what kind of spiritual and institutional monster will they have foisted upon us?" (*d*)

Dr. McGiffert's query needs an answer — a forthright and adequate answer from every serious Congregationalist.

Such is the ultimate scale of this first modest American attempt at Church organic union across denominational lines as viewed by our ecumenists and others. (*e*) Congregationalists are fortunately still free to refuse to have anything whatever to do with gargantuan

continued on page 9, col. 1

CONGREGATIONAL FREEDOM AND THE UNITED CHURCH

Rev. Thomas B. Hoover, Ph.D., Eagle Grove, Iowa

Without attempting to anticipate what the emerging United Church of Christ will be like ecclesiastically after the final adoption of a constitution, I should like to share for constructive purposes my reasons for believing that an effort should be carefully made to preserve some of those Congregational freedoms which are not ordinarily enjoyed in other types of church polity. There is indeed within the frame-work of protestantism a definite need for major denominations which basically invest authority in the laity rather than in the clergy, whose affairs are democratically rather than autocratically controlled, and where individual freedom takes precedence over ecclesiastical expediency. It has been my own observation that such an ideal is rarely achieved in other than congregational forms of government.

It seems, for example, that in pyramidal systems the tendency is for the balance of power to gravitate toward the clerical constituency despite claims for parity in those systems, designed to give the laity equal authority with the ministry. It is also a tendency in those denominations employing a type of polity that delegates power to church courts and councils that authority becomes more and more concentrated.

Commissions, for instance, are often given in representative forms of government the power to act finally and authoritatively for the entire constituency of a church court, making the action of the body more autocratic than democratic by a process of delegating ultimate power into the hands of a few. The practice of committing judicial matters to commissions with power to act finally and conclusively for a whole constituency is to the point in this regard.

A Case in Point

The writer is familiar with the case of a minister, under such a system, who was removed from his pastoral relation by a commission consisting of three ministers and two laymen representing a constituency of nine thousand members in the original jurisdiction. The request for the removal was made by four members only of the minister's congregation which had called him, but which had no voice in the matter of a retention of his services. The commission taking the action in this case merely put into the record that the minister involved was incompatible with the four complainants. Successive courts in the system of the denomination failed to sustain the minister's objection to this arbitrary action on the ground that there was no violation of constitutional procedures.

However this may have been, the minister's experience as a result of having protested was to have no subsequent opportunity for service in that communion.

Ecclesiastical Expediency

It is further observable that ecclesiastical expediency tends to take precedence over individual rights in systems of the pyramidal form. An instance comes to mind in which the minister of a congregation of twelve hundred members was removed from his pulpit as a result of approximately fifty of these members claiming his viewpoint on social relations too liberal. The action was reported to have been justified in order to save the church for the denomination.

Finally, denominations having a hierarchical type of polity generally assume the legal possessors of church property to be the church-at-large rather than the respective congregations. This, however, in the last analysis is a matter which can only be determined by civil court rulings.

Perhaps the best reason for keeping authority decentralized in any system of church government is the human factor suggested by the statement attributed to Lord Acton: "Power tends to corrupt. Absolute power corrupts absolutely." Unless the Constitution of the United Church of Christ preserves this heritage of freedom in Congregationalism, all authority will no longer in fact be under the Headship of Christ.

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continued from page 8, column 2

combinations, to choose new leaders dedicated to Congregational values and to move forward as free Churches in their present fellowship.

FOOTNOTES

(*a*) May 1, 1959, testimony of Petr Deriabin before Senate Judiciary Committee.

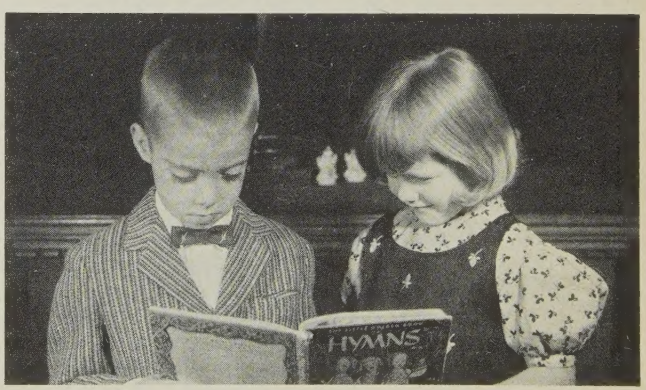
(*b*) Copy of testimony available from the author, see also *Collectivism in the Churches,* pp. 126-130.

(*c*) The WCC "played a tremendous part in the consummation of the union of the C.C. Churches with the E. & R. Church" Dr. Douglas Horton is reported to have said (Christian Century August 14, 1957.) The C.C. Churches are NOT yet in the union despite this assertion.

(*d*) The Congregational magazine *Advance,* refused to print a condensation of the McGiffert article in May, 1947. It has been similarly reluctant to print any articles in support of Congregationalism — a strange attitude for a paper supported by Congregational funds to assume!

(*e*) See Knox *The Early Church and the Coming Great Church.*

Our Cover Picture



The two young Congregationalists who are singing New Year greetings to our readers are Gary Collins and Alison Card, of the Winthrop Congregational Church School, Holbrook, Massachusetts. They are shown here facing us. The photo was taken by John G. Towns, a member of that Church, who has shown great interest in the work of the National Association.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP

Why I Am A Congregationalist

Miss Dolores Thompson, Hartford, Connecticut

It is a wonderful adventure to reflect upon the courage and bravery shown by those first few Congregationalists who founded the Congregational Way in America. "Unbelievable" is the only term to describe their terrific fortitude. Maybe that is one of the reasons why I am a Congregationalist, for, whenever I am in a Congregational Church, I feel their strength shining in every pew, in every aisle, and in every sermon given there. Those few who came and lived through that first unforgettably hard winter, and who then went on by themselves to establish the Plymouth Church can only be considered amazing. They had such great love for their religion that they left behind the conveniences of England and Holland to brave an entirely different land.

The first Pilgrims and Puritans gradually formed small settlements and in each a Church was founded, differing slightly from the rest. Thomas Hooker, for example, differed with the Puritans of the Bay Colony and therefore migrated to Hartford to found the first Congregational Church in the Connecticut Valley. All Congregational Churches differ slightly; for each is an independent body, not ruled under some outside authority. The Congregational Churches have been a progressive fellowship, always keeping a modern trend, unlike others which have not. For example, as the early settlements grew larger, people such as John Eliot and the Mayhews began to preach to the Indians, teaching them the gospel until as a result there were four thousands Indians who believed in one God, the only God, and twenty-four Indian preachers. The Congregational fellowships, of course, met with difficulties as they enlarged, but learned men such as John Wise, John Winthrop, Jonathan Edwards, Timothy Dwight, Lyman Beecher, and ever so many more, helped to settle them fairly.

It was at this time that Manasseh Cutler, a Congregational pastor in Hamilton, Massachusetts, and his people pioneered westward. He, through much perseverance, was granted a half-million acres of land north of the Ohio River, and influenced the Northwest Territory ordinance. Since Congregationalists were the first of all the Protestant Churches to move westward, here is still another example of their continuing progressiveness.

Congregational Churches have been greatly interested in education and Congregationalists were chiefly responsible for the founding of many very famous colleges such as Yale, Harvard, Dartmouth, Williams, Bowdoin, Middlebury and Amherst, which rank among top colleges today. Congregationalists promoted a college for women, finally founded by Mary Lyon, a brilliant woman, and called Mt. Holyoke College today.

Some of the reasons why I am a Congregationalist have now been explained, but briefly and truly I am a Congregationalist because the Congregational Way is progressive and modern, with each Church independent of other Churches; because Congregational Churches do not have strict rules but instead follow sincerely the Way of Jesus; and because they therefore have the inner strength to withstand the changes of the world.

SUGGESTED PROGRAMS FOR FEBRUARY

Marilyn Heaney, Secretary

February 7. *Dating and Manners.* Good personal conduct is a true Christian virtue. Young people with church life should not have to be reminded of their manners while dating. Good manners require self-respect, mutual respect, and respect toward parents. A clear conscience is the finest thing to determine behavior. Can the members of your group name some of the courtesies needed to be considered a well mannered date?

February 14. *What's Right and Wrong.* A teen-ager from a Christian home should know what is right and, definitely, what is wrong. Pat Boone's " 'Twixt Twelve and Twenty" has good ideas along that line. Common sense is often the best guide. If in doubt, don't do it! All respect a well mannered teen-ager.

February 21. *Parents and Dating.* The Commandment "Honor thy father and thy mother" should serve as a guide on this. If one has the confidence of his parents, his behavior will be strengthened. One who has the trust and respect of his parents can be allowed more freedom. In an age of publicized delinquency among youths, nothing is more pleasant to see than a warm, trusting, parent-child relationship. Once this is destroyed, it is next to impossible to restore.

February 28. *Going Steady — Pros and Cons.* In most cases this is an individual matter, so no general rule can be stated. Perhaps these questions will help. How many other people can one meet while dating many, without fear of jealousy? Do couples going steady become too familiar with one another and bored with just necking? Can one attend all important events without going steady? Can one obtain the feeling of being liked in any other way? Does it lead to unsuccessful teen-age marriages? Do teen-agers go steady to be "like everybody else?" What does going steady mean in your area and is it taken seriously?

(References: "Facts of Life and Love," Duvall; "Courtship, Engagement and Marriage," Burgess; "Love at the Threshold," Strain; "So Youth May Know," Dickerson.)

Young People: Please Note!

An opportunity for young people of artistic bent to help the cause of our free Congregational Churches is provided by this announcement. A competition will be held for designing the best heading to be used regularly on the National Association Pilgrim Fellowship page of THE CONGREGATIONALIST. This heading, including the words "National Association Pilgrim Fellowship" must occupy a space not greater than 2″ by 7″.

Entries for the competition must be in the hands of the Editor by March 15, 1960. The names of contestants should appear only on an envelope containing the design. The decision will be made by a competent judge who will not know the names of the contestants. A prize of ten dollars will be given to the winner. The new heading will appear regularly on this page beginning with the May, 1960, issue.

Congregational Bookshelf

Rev. Royal G. Davis, Los Angeles, California

For those who want better to understand the Sunday church service and any who seek a careful study of liturgical development, PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP is highly recommended. The background material is well presented and the comments made upon it are judiciously stated. Early Congregationalism began with a protest against everything but the plainest worship. Since then, some have felt that beauty in worship is no barrier to sincerity and Protestant faith. The author is an eloquent spokesman for the shift in opinion.

Raymond Abba, a British Congregationalist, has served as professor of theology in Australia and this book represents lectures given at the University of Sydney. He highlights the theological rather than the esthetic side of the worship experience. While he intends to be practical he does not neglect the historical dimension.

Those who prefer a simple service in the Pilgrim tradition will not find this book to their liking, nor will those who admire the more liberal and cultural approach of Von Ogden Vogt. The author speaks out of and to the Western liturgical tradition, Roman, Anglican, and to a much lesser extent, Calvinist.

Somehow the semi-Episcopal order of worship seems out of place in the white steepled meeting house and it is even less relevant for a church built in contemporary style. Yet Prayer Book adoration may befit one of those half-gothic stone cathedrals which carry the Congregational name and are dedicated to the Congregational spirit. (OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, $2.75).

NEWS NOTES

Pastoral Change: Dr. Edward W. Day, Executive Secretary of the Ohio Congregational Christian Council, has been called to the Church at Dundee, Michigan, where he began his work on December 1st. He will also continue part-time work with the Ohio Council.

Pastor Called at Bingham. Rev. Lowell Erickson, formerly of the Methodist Church at Strong, Maine began work at the Congregational Church of Bingham on December 1st. He will continue studies at Bangor Theological Seminary.

FROM THE OLD COUNTRY

A Quarterly Column by
Rev. Albert D. Belden, D.D., of London, England

Is the Pilgrim Faith sufficient for the twentieth century and the new age? I find that over here there is a tendency on the part of some leaders to speak a little contemptuously of the Pilgrim Fathers and their antecedents as though their tenets and teachings were rather old and out-worn and ill-fitted for the wonderful new times that we face. Those who are chary of the new "United Church" development (which I find, by the way, is emerging also in Australia), are to be regarded as hanging on to the out-worn shibboleths of the seventeenth century.

As though "liberty" could ever become an "out-worn shibboleth"! As though a movement to a more humanly authoritarian form of Church government and organization were not a retreat to pre-seventeenth century conditions and to policies still more out-worn however consonant with reactionary elements reasserting themselves in this age!

Looking Through the Telescope

I regard the history of Church development in the Christian centuries as resembling a slowly drawn out telescope. As you hold it to the eye, to get a truer vision, you tend to pull out yet another section of the instrument.

At last you reach the limit, the last section — the pulling out of which transforms your view through the telescope. It is the lens of liberty with which you crown the sequence.

Then along comes someone who says "What an ungainly affair this telescope is! We'll just push back again this awkward, small, last-to-emerge section. It will make a more compact telescope. In it goes — let's merge it with the former section!"

Yes — but who is to stop this reverse process? May not section after section be drawn in again to the instrument, until at last all is as it was before? The 'scope' will then be a 'scope' again but hardly a 'telescope' with full and *final* vision.

That is the peril I see in an Ecumenicalism that has not the courage and the insight to make absolutely fundamental and startlingly evident "the freedom wherewith Christ has made us free."

It is not the Pilgrims who will ever be "out of date" but only those successors who get "cold feet" when expected to pursue to its logical goal the Pilgrim passion and adventure.

WOMEN'S WORK *(continued from page 4)*

PROGRAM POSSIBILITIES

One of the most satisfying ways of telling the story of our work at Piedmont College is to invite one of the folks in your area who has been on campus. The interpretation of any eye witness is always desirable. Our suggestions include: Dr. Harry R. Butman, Church of the Messiah, (Congregational) Los Angeles, California; Dr. C. Fraser Keirstead, Old South Congregational Church, Worcester, Massachusetts; Dr. John D. Rose, Lathrup Village, Michigan.

A set of Kodachrome slides is also available, including a script. This twenty minute program would be a colorful way of getting acquainted with our college young people and our area. Requests for these slides may be made to the National Association office, 176 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin.

Gifts of clothing for children, women, and men are always most acceptable at our Thrift Shop. Students and faculty members are given the first opportunity of purchasing your gifts of clothing, shoes, and novelties. Several times each week the members of the community are also invited to shop at the Thrift Shop. It is one of the best known and busiest places in our little village. Moreover, your used garments yielded an income of over $2,000 last year, which operated the college for about twenty days.

Annuity Gifts are also recommended for friends who desire to help our work and at the same time receive a liberal income for life on a capital investment in hard-working youth.

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OUR DEVOTIONAL COLUMN

Rev. William P. Gray, Squantum, Massachusetts

There appeared in one of our national magazines the story of the centipede, who suffering from arthritis, went to the wise old owl for advice. The owl thought for a long time then replied, "Centipede, you have one hundred legs swollen with arthritis. My advice is that you change yourself into a stork. With only two legs you would cut your pain 98%. Then by using your wings to stay off your legs you wouldn't have any trouble at all." The centipede was delighted with the suggestion and asked the wise old owl how he could change into a stork. The owl quickly replied, "Oh, I wouldn't know about the details. I'm in general policy."

Perhaps at times we are like the centipede. We must defeat and know the meaning of sorrow, and we want to know how we can find purpose and meaning to life. At such a time we do not want the advice given by the owl. We are told to have faith and to put our trust in God, yet how is this possible when grief makes God seem remote and unreal? Yes, when men and women are sinking in the depths of despair it is of no avail to toss them straws of pious words which do nothing to sustain them. This does not mean, however, that the Christian faith does not have an answer to the problems which confront us.

When Jesus walked by the shores of Galilee He called men to follow Him. Those men of faith who left all behind and gave themselves in service did not then and there become men of iron, able to withstand whatever life brought to them. There were times when they stumbled and fell. There were times when they could not understand and were disappointed. Their faith was a long time in growing to maturity but eventually the day came, after much struggle and despair, when they knew that God was with them even in the valley of the shadow of death.

Recently we constructed a steeple on our church. When we look at it we see brick and copper. But there is more to that steeple than appears on the surface. Hidden beneath the exterior, from the foundation to the cross on top, there is interwoven a network of steel girders and braces. They are out of sight yet it is the unseen which gives the steeple its strength. The winds and the storms exert pressure upon it but those outside pressures are neutralized by the inward braces.

That is what Jesus did for men and women who followed Him. He did not remove grief and sorrow from the world but He promised to give us the strength to overcome whatever life might bring. When something occurs in life that demands a strong faith we cannot manufacture it at a moment's notice. Faith is not like the cold water faucet which we turn on and off at will whenever we feel thirsty.

Faith comes from years of close association with God. It has been said that doing and knowing are blood relations and that we cannot have the Christian's faith until we lead the Christian's life.

Regional Meeting in the Ontario Church, Illinois

Rev. and Mrs. Ellsworth D. Lyon of the Ontario and Wataga Churches in northwestern Illinois, invited members of the Churches in that area which intend to remain Congregational, to a meeting in the Ontario Church, Sunday afternoon and evening, October 18. About sixty people responded to the invitation. Time was given in the afternoon for the discussion of themes which the people themselves presented. The result was that much of the time went into conversation about the proposed Constitution of the United Church. There were no formal addresses. Mr. Lyon moderated, and many of those present took part in the discussion, asking questions and offering comments. In this way it was a truly Congregational gathering. No resolutions were presented, and no vote was taken, but it was apparent that the interest was widespread, and that there was a genuine concern as to what a national Constitution would do to Congregational freedom.

A Vital Meeting

The vitality of the meeting confirmed the judgment of a number who have been active in the Illinois Fellowship of our Churches that meetings of Continuing Congregationalists, drawn from small sections of the state, would ultimately be more generally attended than State meetings. They can be more frequently held and so will satisfy a real need among Continuing Church people for fellowship, and for frank and thorough discussion of important questions confronting them. This should be particularly true in Illinois, where Churches may be widely separated, and often under the leadership of ministers who are in favor of the United Church. The Ontario meeting is a beginning, and it is expected that similar meetings will follow, covering a limited area, and involving a small number of Churches.

At Ontario a snack followed the discussion. This was prepared by the women of the Church. No charge was made, but an offering plate was conveniently located, and contributions were sufficient to cover mailing costs for the invitations. After supper Mr. Lyon closed the meeting by leading in a devotional service. It can be predicted that the loyalty of Continuing Congregational people to each other and to their cause will be increased and strengthened by such face-to-face meetings, with the shaking of hands, the learning of each other's names, and becoming acquainted with the faces of many others in the Churches nearby who expect to keep Congregationalism alive and active.

Mr. Lyon is the Moderator of the Illinois Fellowship of Churches, and Mrs. Lyon is Secretary. Rev. Harvey Young (retired) of Galesburg is Vice-Moderator and Miss Marjorie Battey of LaGrange is Treasurer, stepping into the place left vacant by the death of her father, R. B. Battey of LaGrange, long active in the Continuing Congregational cause. Special laymen's activities in Illinois come under the leadership of A. Stuart Oskamp of Glen Ellyn.

(Reported by Rev. Harvey Young)

(Other Recent Meetings Will Be Reported Next Month)